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L. Nave B.D. 2nd

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From the Author

S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AT ST. MARY'S,

JAN. 30, 1800.

BY

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JAMES LANDON, B. D.

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Ἐν ᾧ σχήματι μεγίστη ἡ πόλις ἐτυγχάνει καὶ ἐλευθερώσῃ ἔσται.

THUCYD.

OXFORD.

1800.

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Handwritten notes at the top of the page, including "P. 100" and "The British Museum".

S E R M O N

PRELIMINARY REPORT

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

AT ST. MARY'S

Jan. 20, 1851.

BY



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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OXFORD.

1851.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THEOPHILUS JONES.

THE propriety of prefixing to the following pages the Name of one, whose Life illustrates the Principles they were written to estimate, is, Sir, my chief reason for addressing them to you. I have long contemplated in your firm, clear, and decided Conduct, the virtues of a mild, subdued, and manly Temper. It was my duty to cultivate, and I fondly hoped to see those Virtues transmitted in your beloved Son. Since that has not been granted, I trust I may be pardoned for still wishing to make them an useful Example. The Spirit, Industry, and Success, with which you have so fully discharged the benevolent offices of social Life, and taught many persons as well as myself, to regard you with Love and Veneration, must be referred to your sound Religious Principles, and your excellent Common-Sense,

I am your most grateful
and affectionate Servant,

THE AUTHOR

RIGHT HONORABLE

THEOPHILUS JONES

THE pleasure of receiving the following pages
the name of one whose life illustrates the prin-
ples that were written to illustrate in 1871, my child
wishes for nothing more to you. I have long
commented in your time, clear and decided Con-
fession the virtue of a wild, labored, and nearly
Tempter. It was my duty to contribute, and I thought
I ought to let these virtues manifest in your life.
I have seen since that has not been given, I think
I may be proud of all willing to make them
an active example. The spirit, industry, and suc-
cess with which you have to fully illustrated the
beneficial effects of social life, and which many
persons as well as myself, to regard you as I do
and Veneration, must be referred to your journal
Religious Tracts, and your excellent (common-
sense) and your own words.

I am your most grateful

and affectionate friend,
THE AUTHOR

I PETER, ii. 17.

HONOUR ALL MEN, LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD,
FEAR GOD, HONOUR THE KING.

A REGARD for Regal Authority is here placed upon the most exalted principles. The enlarged philanthropy, which promotes the dignity and welfare of mankind, the warm affection, by which we are united to those whose faith establishes a communion with us in purity and devotion, and that awful influence over human actions, which arises from the fear of God, benevolence, Christian charity and piety, are combined to frame the mind for respect and obedience to him in whose hands is placed the public authority for the sake of the common welfare, and who is here emphatically called the King. The precepts delivered in the text derive great force from the considerations with which they are connected; they immediately follow a strongly marked discrimination of what has justly been called a manly, moral, regulated liberty.

From the weight of these precepts, added to the circumstance of their being delivered in a Catholic Epistle, and from the historical fact that the Theo-

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cracy was, under the permission of the Almighty, immediately succeeded by Regal Government, something may, without hazard, be inferred to strengthen an opinion, that monarchy, if not absolutely enforced, is especially approved by divine authority. There is no danger that this reasoning should prove too much, and become a support of monarchic power under all its forms and effects. As it refers only to him "who is the servant of God unto us for good," it cannot be supposed to extend to any instance of tyranny or despotism.

There is an earnest inclination in Christian minds, on all important subjects and occasions, to seek for the guidance of human actions in the revealed will of God; and while we find in it clear rules for every thing upon which our eternal welfare depends, we are most safely directed by it to the means of obtaining real and permanent temporal advantages. With regard to the structure, operation, and maintenance of civil and political institutions, in national as well as in all other concerns, we may assuredly conclude, that the safest guide to happiness upon earth, is that which leads us in the path to heaven.

The aggregate of individual virtues constitutes public worth. Our Saviour's precepts, therefore, with respect to communities are few, relate generally to the conduct of men as members of any political body, and prescribe no particular form of polity. But what is not to be found in the especial doctrines,

trines, may be deduced from the general spirit of Christianity : and that government may be truly asserted to be consonant to the will of God, which, in its general composition, and in all its great departments, preserves pure religious principles, and which, from the nature of its administration, is eminently productive of benefits to his creatures.

That this character may with truth be applied to our government, must be generally acknowledged from its known influence and effects. The present occasion will be employed to shew in what especial manner the religious sense, which prevails through its structure and operation, is the chief cause of its excellence, and the principal source of those national blessings which it provides and secures. This statement will point out the Necessity and Importance of a Religious Establishment, which inculcates and enforces the Christian Principles of civil and social duties. It will likewise shew the True Means by which our National Institutions must be maintained, and account for the Conduct and Measures of those men who have been active to overthrow them. Considering the British Constitution in this point of view, as ratifying its superiority and securing its beneficial influence by the principles and support which it receives from Christianity and improved Common Sense, its obligations become strengthened; Religion binds upon the Conscience what Reason impresses upon the Understanding.

The Originals of British Polity were religious; and the material corrections and improvements it has undergone, have been effected under the auspices, and confirmed by the sanctions of Christianity. Even in Druidical legislation and jurisdiction it appears that Religion prevailed; and we trace its purer influence in the most important characters and transactions, which are connected with the whole history and formation of the government of this country. Alfred allotted a third part of his time to devotion. The contenders for Magna Charta bore on their banners "God and his holy Church." And at the Reformation and the Revolution our great political blessings were secured by the operation of pure Christian Doctrines. Thus they who laid the foundation of our constitution, and seized the favourable occasions of advancing it to excellence, still tempered the love of freedom, and the spirit of enterprize, with earnest piety. While liberty animated, while commerce enriched, and power aggrandized the realm, they placed its secular interests upon the solid security of religious obligation. Thus our legislature, and those who officiate under it, were consecrated against the prophanations of fraud, and violence, and every kind of injustice. Those who direct and administer in the government of men, who from their high office bear the vicergerency of God himself, ought indispensibly to have awful and worthy notions of their functions and destination. Accordingly our constitution supposes it in all, and our national

national sense cannot brook the notorious deficiency of virtuous principle in any of those who hold exalted stations in the legislature: neither splendid talents, nor popular measures, nor unremitting efforts can controvert this honourable assertion,—“That public confidence is incompatible with private profligacy.” It is therefore a fundamental article of our government, that whoever shall take an active part in the legislative and executive branches of it, must solemnly declare that he knows and believes, and at the same time pledge himself to maintain those genuine doctrines of Christianity, which, in material parts of the system he is to support, are clearly determined and decisively enforced. If these precautions were omitted, if men of unsound principles and unsafe professions could erect themselves into the sacred functions of the legislature, could direct and controul its ordinances, there would be a canker in the very heart of the community, and its members would soon grow sickly, waste, and perish.

Man is in his constitution religious. Superstition is against his reason: atheism is against his instincts: most wisely, then, have the authors and improvers of our national establishments founded them upon this great principle of our nature, and so framed and consolidated their structure, that the religious sense, regulated, purified, and exalted by genuine Christianity, should pervade the whole, and pre-

predominate in every part. Wherefore, not only in the orders of the state, in the title and designation of the Sovereign, and in the persons of legislators and magistrates, but also in their acts and proceedings, it has an appointed and distinguished place and influence. From sacred rites they proceed to solemn deliberation; from the service of the most High, to the care of his creatures: and while the means of obtaining the Divine favour to give success to human endeavours are thus duly sought, the legislative body becomes venerable in itself, and stamps its own dignity upon the national character. Of what consequence these pious observances are to the proceedings of any government, may be collected from the destructive transactions of those times, when their mild and pure devotion was superseded by the wild cant of a furious and hypocritical fanaticism; or from the mischievous short-lived decrees of those modern legislators, who, turbulent and impious, unmindful of heavenly power, and regardless of human reverence, pursue their unhallowed councils.

To answer the great purpose of maintaining a religious sense, the statutes of the realm and the forms of our judicature allege the want of this sense, as the cause of the evils their acts are intended to prevent or punish. The same object seems to be pursued in the parochial distribution of territory: this is productive of valuable benefits to the community; it fixes a
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strong controul over the moral conduct of the inhabitants, by placing them, at the same time, under the influence of the clergy, and the authority of the magistracy.

The important effects of a religious principle, and the necessity there is for its extension and operation through every department of national polity, may be further instanced by tracing a few of the benefits which result from it. It is the only sure means of establishing the enjoyment of real freedom. Though liberty is that which enables men to do what they please, it cannot prevail unattended by some influence, which disposes them to do as they ought. "Society cannot hold together, unless a controuling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere:" if it does not work internally upon the minds, it must operate externally upon the actions of men: here, therefore, we find a substantial reason for the existence and enjoyment of true liberty in this country, and for the absence of it elsewhere; Christian ethics or absolute sway seem necessary to the preservation of civil society. Under our religious profession and our national institutions, we are happily taught and bound by law and by conscience to observe rules which establish invariable grounds of hope and fear, and thus keep our actions in a determined course, direct them to a certain end, and preserve our notions of civil liberty and of civil duty steady, clear, and resolved. It is then from above that the wisdom,

wisdom, moderation, and benevolence are derived, which distinguish and characterize our monarchy, which so eminently produce benefits to those who live under its influence, and have so providently excluded incentives to evil from its composition. Does not the strict and consummate justice with which public good, political equity, and individual interests are therein promoted through the wise and virtuous distribution and combination of the power which arises from numbers, rank, and property, follow and fulfil that high commandment, by which laws and magistracy are appointed to maintain the public welfare? Does not a system under which there are few of those competitions which excite bad passions, but enough to call forth manly virtues into action, which is above those endless rivalships which create jealousies and produce animosity, while it offers due honours and dispenses just rewards to superior talents and distinguished worth—does not such a system, while it raises human virtue and obviates human infirmity, eminently accord with the spirit and advance the purpose of Christianity? Contrast it with republicanism, whose principles, if we may judge from their known nature and effects, are calculated to foment violent and bad passions; in which rage and phrenzy have so often overcome prudence and deliberation: reflect a moment upon the republican proceedings which wrought the calamities we in this day's solemnity review with horror, and which we in the present times

times have witnessed with alarm ; and it will appear that, by perverting or insultingly rejecting that mild and salutary influence which we declare to be essential to the well-being of society, republicanism among Independents and among Jacobins aggravated itself into anarchy, and through its natural spirit and accustomed ordinances proceeded to increase aversion into hatred, to embitter hatred into rancour, and to sharpen rancour into revenge : and thus men, who were at first but dissatisfied, have been urged, and irritated, and inflamed, until, through the dominion of malevolent affections, they were rendered turbulent, rebellious, and blood-thirsty, and became the murderers of Charles I. and of Lewis XVI.

— So far indeed is the form and spirit of the British monarchy from awakening any evil disposition, that it consults and improves the best properties of human nature. It calls upon the people for that kind of acquiescence which the mind is naturally inclined to shew towards well constituted power : for doubtless it is rationally inclined to pay cheerful obedience to one person, or to a few who act under a general authority ; but not to rest satisfied with the mandates of a victorious majority in councils, in which every individual has a share of the deliberations, and in which the subdued “ party is soured and exasperated by previous contention, and mortified by subsequent defeat.” As an instance that it

is the nature of our government to cultivate the best qualities of human nature, it may be observed, that it places national bravery upon the fairest conclusions of the understanding, and the best qualities of the heart. Our reason makes us acknowledge and value true liberty, our courage prompts us to maintain it, and our constitutional principles, as the sure means of so doing, direct us to kindle British valour by the love of our King and of our Country; to unite loyalty with freedom; and thus in its noblest efforts to accumulate powerful motives, by combining the warmth of personal attachment with the generosity of public spirit.

Such is the influence of that religious principle, which prevails in the formation and effects of the government of this country, essentially contributes to render it not only a security against wrong, but also to make it the nurse of the best powers and dispositions of human nature, excludes from its proceedings the mean and ferocious vices, and qualifies it to improve the national character, out of which it has grown, and to which it is adapted,

To perpetuate this character and influence, civil and ecclesiastical institutions have been interwoven with each other in the fabric of our constitution. He who mercifully taught men all that was necessary to their well-being, enjoined no system of government: in his omniscience he saw that to establish
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the welfare of mankind collectively, it was sufficient to instruct them individually in those mild, humble, benevolent, and magnanimous virtues, which his precepts and example graciously inculcated. Obeying his will, our wise and pious forefathers, the Christian statesmen of this land, in order to constitute a system, which should bid fair to promote and protect its safety and prosperity, settled certain institutions, under which they could implant and cherish these virtues. Hence our civil polity, in its frame, spirit, and operation, became essentially united with a religious establishment, under which, by the pious efforts of able and learned men, out of the divine simplicity of the precepts of Revelation, has been formed a sacred discipline eminently calculated to teach and enforce the practice of every duty which belongs to man. Thus the relation and mutual connexion of our Church and State arose, and were sanctioned and secured by those laws, which indispensably maintain their union. In this great point of national interest, our wisdom has co-operated with our virtue to produce that just and manly zeal in support of establishments, which discovers itself even in the common habits of the British character; in devotion, in social intercourse, and even in festivity, we strengthen the national polity by uniting it with our religious notions. The altar and the throne, the service of our God and the safety of our country, make up one great patriotic sentiment, which animates and determines

every true Briton, and instructs him to place in the guardianship of our venerable institutions every thing that is dear and every thing that is sacred, the protection of his property, the security of his life, and the sanctuary of his soul.

It is then to be expected that seditious and rebellious men should prosecute their views by the degradation and subversion of sacred ordinances; that, in order to remove the great obstacle to their views, their craft and fury should be employed to undermine or overthrow ecclesiastical establishments. These thwart their efforts and confound their designs; they implant in the mind a religious awe and a religious sense, which discipline and strengthen it with that pure and exalted spirit, which is of a nature neither to swerve nor to submit, however it may be assailed by craft, or assaulted by violence: they cherish too that rational fear of God, which, superseding all other apprehensions, deprives turbulent men of one principal mean of acquiring power. While this prevails, they cannot rule by terror. They find then that, to destroy settled and salutary order, they must vitiate the community, by removing the important discipline of social life.

Hence it has prudently been urged, that if our ecclesiastical settlements, the key-stone of that firm arch which supports the state, should be loosened or removed, the whole fabric would be endangered, or
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reduced to ruin. Our able and experienced statesmen have concluded, (some of them unfortunately witnessed) that tumult and calamity must await the realm, if it should be deprived of those sacred ordinances, which create and preserve in the minds of the people that respect for order, that veneration and love of approved maxims, upon which the welfare, the enjoyments, and the subsistence of civil life essentially depend. They knew how indispensable to the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom those qualities and dispositions are, which diffuse through it civil contentment and well-grounded allegiance, a modest sense of the privileges of citizens, a steady regard to the duties of subjects, and all the social virtues of Christian humility. They reasoned from the sure evidence of facts. And those who would disturb and change our condition, little as they are inclined to admit any authority but that of their own innovating doctrines, they too use the knowledge which experience affords them, and thence they boldly infer that with the ecclesiastical they can overthrow the civil institutions of the country; that when nothing should remain to prevent their hardening the gross multitude by atheism, or bewildering it with fanaticism, through the dreadful stages of intemperance, disloyalty, and insurrection, they could easily conduct it to their atrocious purpose; that the chain, which binds men together in peace and prosperity, would then be easily broken, and monarchy, episcopacy, and nobility, the sovereign

reign power which rewards, the sacred discipline, and the high distinctions, which foster and call into action virtue and talents, would be soon subverted, and with them the fundamental principles of jurisprudence and legislation; and so they might subject to their power that upon which law is founded, and that which it is enacted to protect, prescription and usage, property and life itself.

Wearied and disgusted, as all good minds have long been, with the impieties which mark the political conduct of ruling factions in a neighbouring kingdom, no allusion would here be made to their conduct, if there were not circumstances in it, which come before us like the witnesses of Heaven, which urge the lesson taught us by the Bible, and in loud warning declare to us, that the fatal measure by which national welfare is destroyed, is the perversion or extinction of the means by which national piety is inculcated and maintained. It would misemploy the attention of this audience to review particularly the measures employed against the established religion by those men, who, in the times to which we on this day look back with perpetuated horror, brought so much calamity upon their country. A consideration of the leading transactions which took place against the Church, and the particular events with which they were connected, will produce the conviction which it is our present purpose to establish. The attacks upon the
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royal prerogative and upon church discipline were made by the same parties, at the same time, and with the same intention: they were made by men of republican principles, when the King was distressed by state necessities; and they were made in order to change or overthrow the government. It seems as if they could not well usurp the royal authority, without disqualifying the Clergy, who felt it their duty, while they possessed the influence, to expose the wickedness of such a proceeding, and to enjoin firmness to resist it. The same kind of coincidence appears in their further transactions: the extirpation, as it was called, of Episcopacy, and the abolition of the Liturgy, were concomitant, or rather preparatory to the war against the Crown and the murder of the King. The degradation of the nobility, the depression of the aristocracy, arbitrary confiscations, frequent plunder, and sanguinary executions, distinguish that period which was disgraced by the prophanation of churches, and the interruption of the hallowed mode of worship and religious instruction. Upon the review of these events, we cannot rationally neglect to avail ourselves as a nation of one of the most valuable uses of history, that it delivers such lessons to mankind, as may warn them against future misfortunes by the detail of past calamities.

It is not, however, sufficient to preserve theoretically a religious principle in the spirit of our government,

government, and in the frame of its establishments ; it must prevail practically through the body of the people, to insure the national well-being. As in the conduct of individuals, so in the transactions of kingdoms, not the mere acknowledgment of the Almighty's power and goodness, obedience to his will, and faith in his promises abstractedly taken, can avail : it is something derived from these, which moves and directs men in life and action. The sacred bond of society is not held by lukewarm virtues ; it is a Christian temper of mind, and course of action, firm, vigilant, and benevolent, that alone can secure nationally, as well as individually, all human welfare. The danger then is, that the people of this country, though correct in religious profession, should be wanting in religious practice. What no one can refuse to admit, it becomes less necessary to enforce. It is therefore to be feared, that while the authorities of Christianity become unquestionable, the duties which it prescribes should not be duly fulfilled. The solemn and important question then is, what is the general cast of national manners ? Does it clearly indicate the character of a Christian people, who duly consider their condition and destination ? Or does it appear that wealth, honours, and pleasure, are the great and sole objects of general pursuit ? If the latter should be the case, there is imminent peril that the advantages of which, as a nation, we have so much reason to boast, may be perverted into the instruments

instruments of destruction ; that, instead of comfort, affluence, and moral improvement, our commerce, our arts, and even our intellectual advancements may generate avarice and effeminacy, or a low, designing, calculating, fraudulent disposition, which would debase and enervate British strength and British spirit ; and so disorder and disease the realm, as to subject it to the power of its foreign or domestic enemies.

“ But is there no balm in Gilead ? Is there no physician there ? ” Happily to prevent the ascendancy of bad passions over just principles in every department of social life, and especially in political affairs, there is a sovereign antidote in the religious principle and the common sense, which have long prevailed and been acknowledged as characteristics of this nation. And it belongs peculiarly to those, whose sacred office it is to preserve social order by enforcing divine commandments, to instruct their countrymen to make the public welfare a religious consideration ; to use careful efforts to keep their minds watchful, and to actuate them with the religious principle which they receive from birth, and in which they are fixed by education, and by that clear and vigorous common sense, which has been disciplined and instructed by experience ; and so to render them, under the influence of a sound conscience and a corrected understanding, prudent,

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vigilant, and enduring against any attempt upon their national safety and prosperity.

It was only by the perversion and delusion of these native principles, that the purposes of those, to whose enormities the present occasion directs our thoughts, could be pursued and accomplished. They craftily rendered the religious temper of the nation an instrument of outrage, and employed it as a veil for their licentiousness; they mixed an inveteracy against Popery with the excited fervors of a vindictive zeal, and thus called forth the wild and unrelenting spirit of Fanaticism. They then proceeded to substitute a fierce persecution for the mild dictates of Christianity, and artfully and impiously persuaded their infatuated followers, that the cause of religion demanded and sanctioned violent and merciless measures; that the crimes of a traitor were suggested by divine inspiration, and that the hand of the assassin was lifted at the command of Heaven. The very language of our holy Scriptures was prophaned, to give an air of sanctity to the most virulent malignity; to brand with infamy and to overwhelm with anathemas the supporters of Monarchy—the members of the established Church. This violation of divine and human laws, if it had arisen from the common incentives to the commission of crimes, would have excited general condemnation and abhorrence. But when the sacred name of Religion was usurped to promote insurrection and bloodshed,

bloodshed, when Piety was fallaciously held up to justify rebellion and regicide, Treason triumphed through the abuse of conscience.

But before these enemies of our monarchy could overthrow it, they found it necessary to add the mockery of reason to the prophanation of religion. Rebellion, according to its usual craft, assumed the imposing air of science, and laid down its principles, its definitions and axioms, to demonstrate a necessity for insurrection and slaughter. In this manner were framed new definitions of allegiance, new distinctions of the King's power in and out of parliament, and new notions of ordinances. The puritanical assembly of divines insidiously taught, that the King was obliged to conform himself to the will and understanding of the Parliament: the leaders of the republican party pretended imminent peril to justify extraordinary precaution—the cause was hypothetical, the proceedings were real: the people were taught to apprehend danger from the court, that they might be brought to concur in what were said to be the only means of safety. An audacious and designing casuistry was thus assiduously employed to warp reason and law itself to a fictitious expediency. Open war against the King was an outrage too great for the majority of the people to digest, who still held rationally and conscientiously, as well as lawfully, their just regard and true allegiance to their Sovereign. But they were misled by an artful mix-

ture of truth with falshood. The enemies of the King first required the people to acknowledge that, if he should levy war to destroy religion and government, such resistance ought to be made as would preserve the kingdom: they then assumed that their own fanatical doctrines, and factious proceedings, were the religion and government of the country; and thus entangled numbers into a persuasion, that, when by these the King was compelled to resort to force, in defence of the British throne and constitution, he broke his coronation oath, and dissolved his government, and that all those who assisted him were traitors to their country.

These and such arguments, by which the minds of the unwary multitude, and even of many men of rank and ability, were misled, were conducted and propagated in such a manner as to gain extensive and powerful influence. Every thing relating to the monarchical part of the constitution was made the subject of discussion; and as few were capable of clear and safe reasoning, the minds of men, through falsehood and fallacy, were bewildered, instead of being convinced. The pretence was, to address and satisfy the understanding: but when attention was once roused, the object evidently was, to alarm the passions, not to direct the judgment of the people. While under these delusions many were deceived into acts of violence, the agents who had practised them devised a method of sanctioning what

what they had effected. They found in their vocabulary of fediton fair names for foul deeds, and terms of virulent opprobrium to revile what they were active to destroy. Liberty and patriotism were new names for licentiousness and rebellion; and loyalty and pure religion were called thralldom and popery. The authors of political mischief, still using the bold, and indefatigable, and fraudulent exertions which belong to their character and views, to these deceitful practices added the hackneyed pretence of (*salus populi*) public good, which has been so often employed both by anarchists and despots; and in this manner the common sense of a great part of the nation was baffled and infatuated, and many men were betrayed into votes and conclusions, which implicated them in consequences they abhorred. Many even of those who took an active part in accomplishing the King's death, could ill bear the catastrophe, and will ever remain alarming examples of the just fate of those men, who involve their country in mischiefs they can neither limit nor controul; and who, while they betray others, prepare and accelerate their own ruin.

These reflections leave little of the national calamity to be justly imputed to him, whose sufferings and virtues are hallowed by the present solemnity. The failures, which some have imputed to his conduct, ought rather to be attributed to the pressure of such accumulated difficulties as, perhaps, never bore

bore with equal weight upon the mind and fortunes of any other man. In his long and laborious struggles for the safety of his crown and kingdom, there is an unparalleled display of piety, wisdom, learning, penetration, and magnanimity; of the dignity and duties of a king, and of the vigilance and ability of a statesman. But he was harassed and betrayed, at the same time, by his foes and followers. Fraud, falsehood, casuistry, and violence, were the constant resources of his enemies: and not even the skill, fidelity, and activity of his honest supporters could counterbalance the selfish ambition, the factious contentions, and the base treachery of some vain, restless, and perfidious adherents.

If, while with reverence and compassion we consecrate his memory, a remark may be admitted upon one error into which he was drawn by craft and force, it should be made in order to urge to mankind, from his high example, an awful admonition, never, upon momentous occasions, to act against their better sense: it is the sacred monitor, which God hath placed within us, and must not be disobeyed. He yielded up his servant against his heart and against his conscience; assured, indeed, that the act would lead to the preservation, not to the destruction, of his subjects and himself.

We have endeavoured to state what there is in the form and spirit of our government, and in our
national

national character, by which the political blessings we enjoy have been obtained, and by which alone they can be preserved and perpetuated. We owe the value and the stability of our constitutional benefits to their being fought and secured upon the sacred basis of all social happiness and comfort ; and we look to the religious principle, and to the sober sense of Englishmen, for their security against the inroads of vice, and for their protection against all such attacks as once subverted and still threaten them. —The experience which this day recalls, and which the present age supplies, forbids us, either through carelessness or guilt, to become again a national example of the truth of that reproachful observation, which, with regard to their best blessings, is but too applicable to the conduct of mankind, “ That they must feel their loss to learn their value.”

In assigning the preceding as the chief causes of the prosperity of this kingdom, it is not meant to neglect or deny other causes of its advancement and celebrity. But leaving them for the philosophical statesman to develope, it may be safely asserted from the evidence of general history, as well as from the particular fortunes of this country, that national piety has been universally among mankind the source and support of all true national welfare. Prosperity and renown belonged to Greece in the pious ages of Solon and Lycurgus ; true greatness
signalized

signalized the severity of Roman virtue ; and, while they obediently followed his commandments, milk and honey flowed round the servants of Jehovah. We presume not to foretel the permanence of British prosperity : but we maintain, that, if the people of this land suffer any state calamity of deep and lasting effect, it will be brought upon them through the dereliction or decay of sound, experienced, and settled principles.

In their religious principles and their common sense, in these native guardians of the national welfare alone, the inhabitants of this country should now seek for prudence and fortitude, to contemplate their difficulties with discretion, and to sustain them with constancy. These principles duly consulted, will qualify us for what our present circumstances require ; they will dispose us, while we feel the afflicting scourge, to acknowledge the necessary protection of war ; they will make us cautious and earnest to preserve from degeneracy the national capacity of defence ; and they will direct us to distinguish and to emulate the true characters of British worth.

Under their salutary influence, while we lament, with all the tenderness which humanity claims or feels, the horrors and devastation of war, its consumption of wealth and strength, the blood of those who fall, and the sorrows of those who survive,
still

still we shall (in addition to the security of religion, property, and life,) acknowledge, that consequences may proceed from it, and to this realm do proceed from it, which are not to be so deeply lamented. It has employed riches, which otherwise rising to superfluity, and dissipated in luxury or hoarded in avarice, might have debilitated the force, and sunk the virtue of the nation. He who duly reflects upon the stability of national happiness and prosperity, will feel more solicitude for the consequences of ease and opulence, than for the result of virtuous, though costly struggles for national safety and for national honour. Since political security, from the sinfulness of the world, must be maintained by military force, we cannot with reason wholly regret an honourable warfare, which trains and disciplines the bravery of our countrymen, and thus furnishes to the kingdom the just means of self-defence.

Nor is it less the dictates of piety and wisdom in the people of this land, that they should be anxiously careful they do not, by home-bred degeneracy, counteract or weaken the exertions and character of those who are the great bulwark of all they hold dear; that they do not thus invalidate the spirit and deeds of those, who, fearless from a familiarity with dangers, enduring from the experience of hardships, and benevolent from their ignorance of deceit, by their intrepidity, their constancy, their simplicity, have so nobly contributed to raise and

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maintain the moral, as well as the martial character of their country.

In order to strengthen or restore those virtues by which alone the salutary laws and envied liberty of this kingdom can now be preserved vigorous and inviolate; we are directed by the influence of the same principles to study and to follow the best examples of British worth: and if we must regret any modern deficiency of such examples, we shall not regret the coarse habits, the military spirit and hardihood of that hospitable, but haughty and intractable character, which, softened by distance, we are inclined to revere for its antiquity: but we shall regret, (and deep must be such regret,) all that is wanting to the present times of that mild, firm, and collected spirit, which, deriving courage from nature, confidence from truth, and patience from Christianity, in councils, in the field, and on the scaffold, animated and enabled our pious ancestors to plead, to combat, and to die for what we happily enjoy in the British constitution.

But all our reflections on these important subjects end in our humiliation before God: they lead us to attribute the prosperity and the calamities of kingdoms to their state of virtue or corruption. That national sufferings are the just punishment of prophane and careless living, is an awful truth impressed upon our minds by a long train of melancholy

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examples, from the scenes of captivity and sorrow by the waters of Babylon, to the seat of bloodshed and confusion on the banks of the Seine. Hence to our own country its particular history now brings home a solemn warning. It suppresses all national boast in the present generation, that, from their sinfulness they scarcely retain what they ought to augment; and admonishes them to fear punishment, if, with all the advantages they possess, they shall deliver up their country's talent unimproved, and transmit no more of public piety and its effects to their descendants, than they have received from their forefathers. Since, therefore, in conscious guilt we must dread afflictions, with penitence and prayer we implore Almighty God to avert from us the visitation of his wrath, which we have deserved; and, grateful for past deliverances to his gracious power, and warned by his goodness to atone for our offences by our future obedience, we approach his throne in firm reliance on his might, and in humble hopes of his mercy.

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THE END

